



www.RogueClimate.org || PO Box 1980, Phoenix, OR 97535 || 541-301-9204

Coos Bay Office: 243 S. 2nd St. Coos Bay, OR 97420 || 541- 816-0758

Re: Rogue Climate Testimony regarding HB 2410 and HB 2038,

Dear Chair Lively, Co-chairs Gamba and Levy, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in opposition of HB 2410 and HB 2038.

Rogue Climate serves and works alongside Southern Oregon and South Coast communities most impacted by climate change, including low-income, rural, youth, and communities of color, by organizing for clean energy, sustainable jobs, and a healthy environment. We do so through leadership development, political education, and campaigns for policies that benefit our communities.

In 1980, Oregon voters strongly approved Measure 7, a moratorium on building nuclear reactors in Oregon until the U.S. has a national nuclear waste repository and Oregon voters approve a repeal of the moratorium. Neither of these conditions have been met to this date, making the influx of pro-nuclear bills like HB 2410 and HB 2038 extremely concerning.

Studies show that nuclear power is at least five times the cost of renewable energy. A [2024 ACEEE study](#) found that households that identify as low-income, African American, Latinx, or Native are more likely to be energy burdened and face a higher energy burden than the average household. Households in rural communities are also more likely to be energy burdened, with [30-39% of households](#) in Jackson and Coos county facing severe energy burdens while also earning [less than \\$15,060 per year](#). This can lead to a [crippling effect](#) on local communities and economies, since families have less disposable income to spend. Building nuclear reactors are notorious for astronomical cost overruns and delays, costs typically borne by ratepayers. Utilities should be focused on providing essential services to meet community needs, rather than using ratepayer funds to invest in dangerous, dirty, and uncertain sources of power.

HB 2038 would direct the Oregon Department of Energy to study “the advantages” of nuclear power in Oregon. Nuclear power is a false climate solution and does not provide clean energy. While it does not create air pollution when operating, nuclear energy creates many forms of radioactive waste that can remain radioactive and dangerous to human health for [thousands of years](#). Much of this waste is still stored temporarily across the country, with 56 million gallons at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation in Washington alone. According to the Department of Energy (DOE), about [one-third](#) of the 177 tanks at Hanford, originally designed to last for 20 years, are known to have leaked. Nuclear power is also incredibly [energy intensive](#), from the processes for



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mining and refining uranium ore and making reactor fuel to large amounts of metal and concrete, which require large amounts of energy, usually from dirty fossil fuels, to manufacture.

HB 2410 would exempt Umatilla County from the statewide moratorium, allowing the first small modular nuclear reactor (SMR) to be built in the U.S.. According to the [IEEFA](#), SMRs still are too expensive, too slow to build, and too risky to play a significant role in transitioning from fossil fuels in the coming 10 to 15 years. Rogue Climate has been organizing with Rogue Valley and South Coast community members to ensure a just transition to renewable energy is affordable, creates good family wage jobs, and brings benefits to BIPOC, rural, and low-income communities. It is clear that Oregonians overwhelmingly want to transition away from fossil fuels and towards safer and healthier energy systems. The dollars invested in SMRs will not be available for use in building out a clean and efficient energy infrastructure. Carbon-free, low-cost technologies are ready now to accelerate the clean energy transition in the next 10+ years while SMRs will still be looking for [licensing approval and construction funding](#).

The Pacific Northwest Utilities Conference Committee has [projected](#) electricity demand to grow 30% in the region in the next decade, due in large part to Oregon's large and growing data center market. New nuclear reactors divert funding from energy efficiency, renewable energy, and storage technologies that are safer, less expensive, and faster to deploy. These bills are not in alignment with the values of the people of Oregon who voted yes to Measure 7 and want to move towards clean and safe sources of power.

We can't afford this new nuclear risk to Oregonians. We urge you to vote no to false climate solutions by rejecting HB 2410 and HB 2038.

Sincerely,

Jess Grady-Benson, Organizing Director

Zöe Serrano, Legislative Coordinator